

Book Reviews.

ANATOMIE DES CENTRES NERVEUX, par J. Dejerine, Professeur agrégé à la Faculté de Médecine de Paris, Médecin de Bicêtre, etc., avec la collaboration de Madame Dejerine-Klumpke, Docteur en Médecine, ancien interne des Hôpitaux de Paris, Lauréat de l'Institut de l'Académie de Médecine. Vol. I. General Methods of Study, Embryology, Histogenesis and Histology-Anatomy of the Fore-Brain. With 401 figures. Paris: Rueff et Cie. 1895. Price, 32 frs.

The anatomy of the brain has for many years been the field of predilection of wild semi-scientific speculation, and its reputation is that of a labyrinth of learned confusion, interrupted only by a few highways of well-ascertained fibre systems standing out of the otherwise marshy grounds. Descriptions by two different authors did hardly seem to refer to one and the same object, and Alexander Hill may have been somewhat justified in his cutting criticism of the anatomical literature on the brain in his "Plan of the Central Nervous System," in 1885. Still, it is perseverance and extension of the methods that he took to task which finally led to the first comprehensive, and none the less comprehensible, work on the human brain.

The work before us marks a decided departure beyond its worthiest predecessor, the latest edition of Quain's "Anatomy," inasmuch as it is dictated by the practical experience of a clinician and neuro-pathologist, besides giving the fullest account of the more strictly scientific, or, as many say, theoretical parts of the brain anatomy. This important feature characterizes every part of the book. The rich, perhaps unrivalled, pathological material of Bicêtre has given M. and Mme. Dejerine just that basis which anatomy of the nervous system needs in order to become a structure built on experience rather than on imagination and speculation.

The first part begins with the description and history of the methods used for the study of the nervous system (pp. 7-57). A very interesting discussion of the choice of a *post mortem* dissection, especially in pathological brains, with full description of the authors' own method, precedes the notes on hardening, embedding, staining and drawing. The second chapter (pp. 58-133) deals with the development of the nervous system, and contains valuable teratological remarks, besides a remarkably clear and well-illustrated account of the assiduous work of the last years.

The third and fourth chapters (pp. 134-232) are devoted to histogenesis, and to histology of the central and peripheral nerve elements in the adult.

The first part is profusely illustrated with drawings taken from

the publications of His, Retzius, Cajal and Ranvier ; the selection of the drawings and their execution deserve equally high praise.

The second part of the volume treats the anatomy of the fore-brain.

The first chapter (pp. 233-386) covers the general morphology, the convolutions and fissures, the base of the fore-brain, and the configuration of its interior. Numerous drawings from photographs take the place of the customary diagrams.

The second and the third chapters (pp. 387-666) are practically a description of macroscopic and microscopic serial sections through the cerebrum, made in different directions, and forming the most complete atlas of those parts published so far.

A chapter on the cerebral cortex (pp. 667-741) and one on the white substance of the cerebral hemispheres (pp. 742-810) form the end of this first volume, rich in pathological observations with regard to the association systems.

The second volume will bring the description of the remaining parts and a systematic analysis of the fibre tracts.

The style is very clear, the current epitome on the margin of the pages very convenient. Schematic drawings are avoided ; the figures are very accurately drawn, and clear.

Thus we have before us the first half of a work of fundamental importance for the progress of neurology, destined to bring the clinician into closer touch with the anatomical literature that is scattered in monographs and journals, and is here, for the first time, made satisfactorily accessible. Meritorious as the smaller works of Edinger, Obersteiner, Féré, Debierre, and the purely anatomical treatises are, none of them could give such a full account of the minute details that interest the clinicians and pathologists of to-day.

It is to be hoped that the second volume will soon follow and bring a very accurate index.

ADOLF MEYER.

URIC ACID AS A FACTOR IN THE CAUSATION OF DISEASE: A CONTRIBUTION TO THE PATHOLOGY OF HIGH ARTERIAL TENSION, HEADACHE, EPILEPSY, MENTAL DEPRESSION, GOUT, RHEUMATISM, DIABETES, BRIGHT'S DISEASE AND OTHER DISORDERS. By Alexander Haig, M.A., M.D., Oxon., F.R.C.P. Second edition, with 36 illustrations. London: J. and A. Churchill, 1894.

The appearance of a second edition of Dr. Haig's volume on uric acid in relation to disease is not only one of the many indications of a growing interest in the disorders of metabolism and general nutrition, but is also strong evidence that people prefer a bad book on an interesting subject to no book at all. For it must be said that the book before us represents a most unscientific attempt to fix the pathology of uric acid excretion and to refer a formidable array of diseases to the presence of an excess of uric acid in the blood or tissues. That this is a mild criticism of Dr. Haig's undertaking is shown in even a cursory review of its leading features.

In the first chapters of his book the author gives his views on the production and elimination of uric acid. Briefly stated these views are as follows :

First, the ratio of formation of uric acid to urea in the body is constant.